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Sent: Saturday, December 08, 2007 3:25 PM
To: Melissa Miller-Henson
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Subject: ribbon proposal

To: Melissa Miller-Hense

I understand that recreational fishers formally asked DF&G staff for an opinion on the feasibility of the "ribbon" proposal, which would allow hook and line fishing in any marine reserve from the shore line out 100 yards. I would like to voice my objections to this proposal following the reasoning of Bob Breen, former head naturalist at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

My opposition is based on the following;

1. The ribbon would be nearly impossible to enforce, since changing tides can exposed or cover hundreds of feet of the intertidal within a few hours.
2. Fishing in this nearshore zone would almost certainly confound any studies being done in the intertidal and the nearshore, especially those being planned to assess the effects of climate change. In the past intertidal and nearshore organisms have been the subject of climate change studies. One of the goals of the MLPA initiative was to establish these areas for scientific study.
3. Even though it is claimed that shore fishers are only 7% of total recreational fishing effort, locally they can have a big effect e.g. the near collapse of monkey face eel and rock pricklyback eel populations at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

4. There is a significant amount of bycatch or catch and release with shore fishers, especially with those species having a size limit. These are: Lingcod, cabezon, kelp and rock greenling, redbait surfperch, leopard shark. The accepted mortality for catch and release is 6 - 7% per year. This may seem small, however since these fishes are long lived, 6 - 7% mortality is compounded year after year. Think of it in terms of a 30 year mortgage. There is a big difference between a 30 year loan at 6% and one at 7%.

The conclusions Schroeder and Love (2002) are appropriate and are quoted here:

"Our findings also suggest that recreational angling maybe incompatible with some common goals of spatial closures, such as protecting marine ecosystem structure and establishing scientific control and marine wilderness areas. Large predators may disappear when a reef is fished even lightly and this may in turn alter ecosystem structure through top down, trophic cascades."

I have been impressed with the general overall tenor of the MPA process in the central California sector. Most stakeholders appear to be clearly committed to a balanced set of MPAs. However the "ribbon" proposal seems totally out of sync with the goals for California's MPAs.

Thank you for you efforts in these matters,

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